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THE WINTER WAR

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All through the last winter the world tensely watched the largest winter battle in history as it raged over Russia between Lake Ladoga and the Caucasus Mountains.

During the winter itself it was very difficult to have a constant clear picture of events. But by the end of March the winter war came to an end. Since then we have studied the mass of material produced by this winter—several thousand published telegrams, army communiqués, and articles, among them some 1,000 of Soviet origin—and present in the following article the sum of this study. It may be considered as the continuation of our article "The First Front" (August/September 1942) and of "The March of War" surveys published in July and October 1942 and January 1943.

THE COURSE OF THE FRONT

A PART from the Finnish front, on which no large-scale fighting has taken place for the last eighteen months, the Eastern Front consisted of two sectors when the winter of 1942/43 set in on the wide plains of Eastern Europe (see maps on pp. 324 and 331).

The northern sector stretched from Lake Ladoga to Oryol: along the River Volkhov to Lake Ilmen, southeastward to the strongly fortified prong of Demyansk, in a wide curve towards the west, leading close by Velikiye Luki to the equally strongly fortified town of Rjev, and east of the railway line Rjev/Vyazma/Bryansk to Oryol. On this northern sector the front had become stabilized during the winter of 1941/42. The Soviets had attempted here to relieve encircled Leningrad and to destroy the jutting German salients of Demyansk and Rjev; but, in spite of frequent and sometimes severe battles, the war had turned into positional warfare, and both sides had had enough time to fortify their strongholds.

The southern sector of the front ran, in the middle of November 1942, from

Oryol to Voronej, then along the Don to the easternmost point of its great bend, across the Don/Volga isthmus to the Volga north of Stalingrad, then from a point south of this city through the Kalmuck steppes to the central Caucasus near Ordjonikidze and westward along the northern slopes of the Caucasus to the Black Sea at Tuapse. This southern sector was the result of the European offensive in the summer of 1942. Consequently, the front here did not have the stable character of the northern sector. With its length of approximately 2,000 kilometers as the crow flies, this new front was three times as long as it had been before the commencement of the summer offensive of 1942, when the southern front ran in an almost straight line from Oryol to Taganrog on the Sea of Azov, mainly along the Donets and Mius Rivers.

TWO FACTS FOR MOSCOW

The problem occupying the minds of the world in November 1942 was: what shape would the war on the Eastern Front assume during the winter? The deliberations on the part of the Soviet and European High Commands were

not known at that time; however, in looking back on the events of the past winter, they can be reconstructed.

Moscow's decision was the result of two facts:

(1) The territory conquered in southern Russia and the northern Caucasus by the European armies in the summer of 1942 included rich agricultural soil and important industries. Moreover, the loss of it robbed the Soviet Union of nine tenths of its routes of communication between the Caucasus and the rest of the Soviet Union and, since the capture of the greater part of Stalingrad, also of the use of the Russian life line, the Volga. It was of the utmost importance for Moscow to regain these regions and at least part of those lost in the first summer of the war as soon as possible.

(2) The Red Army had suffered devastating blows during the two summers of 1941 and 1942. In addition to many millions of men, it had lost millions of square kilometers of land. Its own offensives, which it had carried out in the summer of 1942—at Kertch and at Kharkov—had very soon ended in catastrophe. But the experiences of winter had been different. The sudden onslaught of unusual cold had caused the German troops, which had penetrated nearly to Moscow in the autumn of 1941, to withdraw to the line Rjev/Oryol. In addition to this, the Red Army had, by making use of the winter so familiar to them, been able to make some dents in the German front, especially the deep bulge of Toropets. According to the experiences of the first war winter, the Soviet High Command could count on part of the German armies being withdrawn from the front during the second winter too, in order to recuperate from the exertions of the great summer offensive, to be re-formed, trained in the use of new arms, and prepared for new actions in the summer of 1943.

The necessity of regaining as much as possible of the lost territory, and the fact that winter offered the only chance of accomplishing this, forced the Reds to

undertake a winter offensive at any cost.

THE RED PLAN

Hence, Stalin, as early as the spring of 1942, placed his hopes in a great Soviet offensive in the winter of 1942. The entire resources of the vast part of the USSR still remaining in his hands were placed at the service of preparing an offensive which, synchronized with the establishment of a second front in Europe, was to put all the offensives ever known in history into the shade and—as Stalin had given to expect in his order of May 1, 1942—was, in the course of that year, to lead to the “final annihilation of the German-Fascist armies and the liberation of the Soviet soil.”

In a total mobilization such as had never been carried out anywhere else before, every able-bodied man was put into the Red Army. Boys, women, and old men were mobilized for industry and agriculture, and everything that did not directly serve the war effort was ruthlessly abandoned to starvation and ruin.

It was not until the autumn and on the Volga that the Red Army managed to stop the victorious march of the German and allied armies. But even at that time it had its eye mainly on its winter offensive. All through 1942, millions of soldiers from the whole vast empire, even from the ranks of the Far Eastern Army, streamed into the regions east of the front between Lake Ladoga and the Caspian Sea. The Soviet industry threw all its human and material reserves into the production of tanks, planes, and other war material. As a result of the experiences of the first war winter, special attention was paid to the development of winter arms. Ski troops were trained, tanks were fixed up for the winter, cannons were mounted on sleighs moved by propellers, and all available horses were brought to the front. Perhaps one can even go so far as to say that Moscow regarded the first war winter with its large number of minor and middle-sized engagements as a school for the Red Army, to teach it offensive

operations under winter conditions after a thousand miles of demoralizing retreats.

When the last winter started, Stalin hoped, with his gigantic human and material forces, not only to reconquer the territory lost in the summer of 1942 and to deprive the European armies of their winter rest, but to break the whole German front and to throw it far back.

GERMAN AIMS AND MEANS

In order to understand the strategy of the German armies during the last winter, an elementary military law should be remembered, namely, to employ one's strong arm and hold back the weaker one. Germany's strong arm is the spirit, leadership, maneuverability, and technical equipment of her armies, her weaker one her limitation in man power, or—to put it differently—her wise determination to economize with her human resources. Throughout this war the German strategy has been the more successful the more it followed this maxim.

As far as the attitude of the German High Command towards the winter of 1942/43 is concerned, Berlin has, as usual, been very reticent. We shall, however, attempt to answer this question by recalling the nature of the European war against the Soviet Union.

Bolshevism had torn Russia away from Europe in every respect—spiritual, political, and economic—and had made her a menace to the non-Bolshevist world. The goal of the present war is to bring back Eastern Europe into the fold of European nations—spiritually and politically, so that the constant threat in the rear of Europe may disappear; and economically, so that the food- and raw-material basis of Europe may suffice, not only for the victorious conclusion of the present war, but also for the reconstruction of the Europe of tomorrow.

Theoretically, there are three means of achieving this goal. The first is a change in the domestic political situation in the Soviet Union, which would bring forces to the fore that were favorably inclined towards the new Europe; the second,

the expulsion of the Red Army from Europe; and the third, the annihilation of the Red Army.

The first method would be the most advantageous one. But it is too early to reckon with yet, although there are signs pointing in this direction, as is shown by the case of General Vlassov. Twenty-five years of Bolshevik terror and propaganda have placed serious obstacles in the way of a quick inner change among the Soviet population.

GERMANY'S ALTERNATIVES

In favor of the second method, the expulsion of the Red Army from Europe, it could be said that it is easier to drive off an army than to destroy it. But the vast area represented by the Soviet Union speaks against this solution. If, for instance, the Red Army were forced back to the Urals without being destroyed, this would necessitate the maintenance of a European army of protection at the Urals, more than 2,000 kilometers from East Prussia and 4,000 kilometers from the defenses of the west coast of Europe. Furthermore, the events of the two summers of 1941 and 1942 had shown that the possibilities offered by the second method were limited. In both summers the Red Army had been thrown back over huge distances. Nevertheless, the USSR and its reserves of strength were so great that at the end of summer—1941 before Moscow and 1942 at Stalingrad—the Red Army still had enough strength to offer considerable resistance. The two European summer offensives had inflicted upon the Soviet Union the loss of industrial regions, agricultural soil, mineral resources, and routes of communication; but they had not removed the threat of the Red Army and Bolshevism to Europe.

Thus the third method, that of annihilating as large parts as possible of the Red Army, offered the greatest practical prospects of success. The destruction of this chief instrument of the Soviet Union and of World Bolshevism would free the peoples living in the Soviet Union from the yoke of Bolshevism and Europe from its nightmare. Moscow itself considers

the danger arising from a destruction of the Red Army as far more serious than that caused by the loss of territory. This is evident from the fact that, since the annihilation of Timoshenko's army at Kharkov in May 1942, the Russian command has done all in its power to preserve its armies from destruction, even at the cost of giving up such vast and important areas as the Don Bend and the Kuban territory.

THE TASK FOR THE WINTER

In employing this third method, the German command was faced in the winter of 1942/43 with the task of destroying as many Red troops as possible. Preferably this was to take place in an area not too far east, that is, not too far from the European centers of strength, since the difficulties of transport increased with every kilometer, nor, on the other hand, so far west as to endanger the rehabilitation of Eastern Europe. In view of this, the German High Command stopped its offensive one and a half months earlier last autumn than in the autumn of 1941 and prepared its armies to carry on a defensive war during the winter. Expecting as it did a very powerful Soviet offensive, the German High Command was ready gradually to take back, with the least possible German losses and the largest possible enemy losses, the front that had been pushed almost to the borders of Asia during the summer of 1942. The divisions freed by this shortening of the front could then be employed to reinforce the reserves available for strategic use.

The disadvantage of such a maneuver lay in the fact that it would return to the enemy the important routes of communication—railways and rivers, especially the Volga—which he had lost in the summer of 1942. But there was one possibility, which we shall discuss in detail, of postponing this disadvantage as long as possible: Stalingrad.

Another disadvantage, namely, that the surrender of the territory conquered in 1942 would return extensive industrial and agricultural regions to the Soviet

Union, was of minor importance. In carrying out their brutal "scorched earth" policy, the Soviets had done more than their share to render the territory evacuated by them unserviceable for some time to come. Moreover, a part of the population had been carried off during the retreat of the Red Army; another part was sure to follow the evacuating German troops. (We know now that it did, thus passing a mute vote of non-confidence for the advancing Bolsheviks.) Thus the Soviets would gain little agricultural and industrial profit from the reoccupation of a region across which the flood of war had rolled twice. Neither from the fields of the Don and Kuban area nor from the factories of the eastern Donbass could the Soviets expect any notable production for 1943, to say nothing of the most important armament center of southern Russia, Stalingrad, which lay in ruins.

MOBILITY IN WINTER

On the basis of experience gained by the German Army during the first Russian war winter, extensive and systematic preparations were made as early as the spring of 1942 for the warfare in the second war winter. Since the expected Red winter offensive pointed to a war of movement and not to a positional war, it was essential, in the field of clothing as well as that of housing, to take into account the demands of a war of movement under the most difficult winter conditions.

After manifold experiments—in artificial cold chambers and wind channels as well as under actual front-line conditions—the mass production of quilted uniforms was commenced on April 29, 1942. These uniforms were made of three layers of cloth padded with wool. The seams did not lie one on top of the other, which helped to prevent the wind from penetrating; the outer layers were impregnated; the trousers were also quilted, and the boots had double shafts permitting the wearer to stuff the intervening space with straw or paper; the head was protected by a special head

protector and the face by a mask; the steel helmet was covered by a hood. In this way, a maximum of protection against wind and cold was achieved, as well as a maximum of mobility.

In order to render the troops mobile and as independent as possible of towns and villages—which are especially exposed to bombings and artillery attacks—the question of winter shelter was studied systematically. Where there was enough snow, snow huts such as had formerly been used only on polar expeditions proved suitable. In addition to this, tents made of wind-proof impregnated material, heated by portable stoves, were manufactured in vast numbers.

To keep communications open, innumerable snowplows were brought up to or behind the front, and the engines of motor vehicles were made resistant against cold. For movements between the main routes, hundreds of thousands of pairs of skis and countless sleighs were provided, among which latter the boat-shaped Finnish Akja sleigh, which can easily be pulled by two or three men and yet move fairly heavy loads, proved especially useful.

In this way, the months of October and November, in which no large offensive operations took place, were used by the German side for systematic preparations against the Soviet winter offensive.

FOUR DRIVES AGAINST STALINGRAD

On November 20, 1942, began the Soviet offensive in the Stalingrad area and, moreover, simultaneously from four sides: from the north and the south against the two German barrier positions; from the west (from the Don Loop); and from the east across the Volga (in co-operation with the Red troops still holding out in one district of Stalingrad).

The attack against the northern barrier position bogged down at first. Here the German positions were particularly strong. Severe Bolshevik attacks directed at relieving Stalingrad had already been repulsed by them for months, and a mighty German defense system had gradually been established all across the entire Don/Volga isthmus north of Stalingrad.

The Soviet thrust within the Don Loop was more successful. In the northeastern corner of this loop, in the area of Serafimovitch, the Red Army had managed to retain a bridgehead on the right bank of the Don, and it was from here that they now advanced into the upper Tchir valley. After some initial successes, this thrust was brought to a halt by the Axis troops before it had reached the railway line Likhaya/Stalingrad.



The attack from within the city of Stalingrad remained without influence on the course of events, since it was made with comparatively weak forces.

STALINGRAD ISOLATED

The most important thrust came from the south. Long in advance, the Red Army had concentrated troops and weapons here to the south of the German barrier position. These troops and supplies had been brought in part across the Volga and in part from the Kalmuck steppes on the lower reaches of the Volga and the Caspian Sea. With this army, which was much stronger than could have been expected in view of the difficult transport conditions in this region, the Reds made their main thrust against the defense system of Stalingrad. It was a thrust that, as has not been denied by the German side, possessed an indisputable surprise effect.

With incredible ruthlessness towards the lives of their own men—in the first

two days, 5 Soviet infantry divisions and some 1,000 tanks were sacrificed—the Reds succeeded in breaking through the southern barrier position and in advancing across the railway lines Stalingrad/Salsk and Stalingrad/Likhaya up to the eastern bank of the Don Loop. The importance of this break-through lay in the fact that it cut the only two

railway lines which connected the German army in Stalingrad with the rest of the German forces.

The German command was now faced by the decision: should it order the German and allied troops in and around Stalingrad to hold out, or should it order them to fight their way back westward to the bulk of the European armies?



The Southern Sector of the Eastern Front during the Winter of 1942/43

White arrows show the Soviet attacks up to the completion of the break-through at Bogutchar. All German barrier positions and defense centers, with the exception of the Mius River line and the front southwest of Oryol, are no longer occupied. The three barrier positions at Stalino, Pavlograd, and Krasnograd are, of course, still in German hands, although they are no longer important

That the latter alternative would have still been possible at that time can be safely assumed with an army which proved in the course of the next two months that it was capable of enormous achievements.

THE GERMAN DECISION

As became clearly apparent in the course of the winter war, Stalingrad held the key position in the entire Red plan of offensive. Stalingrad is the junction of six important lines of communication, viz., the railways Stalingrad/Moscow, Stalingrad/Likhaya/Kharkov, Stalingrad/Salsk/Caucasus, and Stalingrad (or Krasnaya Sloboda on the east bank of the Volga)/Caspian Sea/Urals, as well as the river routes up the Volga to central Russia and down the Volga to the Caspian Sea. While Stalingrad was in the hands of the European armies, there was no rail connection between the bulk of the Soviet Army and the Red armies in the Caucasus, apart from a new line Saratov/Astrakhan/Kizlyar. As long as the German flag waved over Stalingrad, the Soviet masses could, it is true, batter against the German fronts and perhaps even dent them here and there, but they could not carry out any really large-scale operations. In spite of all the motorization effected by the Red Army for many years, the railway lines have remained the backbone of military operations, especially during the winter.

Stalingrad had lost its importance as a city and center of industry, owing to its almost complete destruction. Since, moreover, the Volga froze over anyway in November, there was no necessity, at least during the winter, for maintaining a German army on its banks in order to prevent the transportation of oil and other war-essential goods on this life line. It was Stalingrad's significance as a railway junction which determined the German command to hold Stalingrad as long as possible.

THE SIXTH ARMY

This difficult and honorable task was entrusted to the German Sixth Army under General Paulus, which also con-

tained two Rumanian divisions, one Croat regiment, and one battalion of Turkestan volunteers.

No official German figures have been released regarding the total number of the defenders of Stalingrad. In their communiqué of January 17, the Soviets mentioned the figure of "200,000 to 220,000," a figure which they later attempted even to increase. In view of the understandable desire of the Soviets to make their success appear as great as possible, and in view of the notorious unreliability of their propaganda, particularly where figures are concerned, it is safe to assume that the actual number was far below that named by the Soviets.

When the Sixth Army received orders to remain in Stalingrad and not to attempt to fight its way back, the German High Command obviously reckoned on relieving the cut-off troops. The fact that the Soviet propaganda did not begin to mention the isolation of the Sixth Army until weeks later shows that the Soviets also counted on this. On several previous occasions they had already made the experience that cut-off German troops were finally relieved, sometimes only after months.

"KHOLM TACTICS"

Perhaps it is permissible to coin the term "Kholm tactics" for a new conception of military science which first proved its worth in the winter of 1941/42 at Kholm. These tactics grew out of the fact that in the present war, in contrast to that of 1914/17, the German Eastern Front does not consist of one uninterrupted line of trenches, but rather of a chain of powerful strongholds of varying size with relatively weak defenses between them. In these gaps the enemy may be able to break through, as he did in the first war winter between Demyansk and Rjev. But, as long as the strongholds are in the defender's hands, the attacker remains seriously menaced in his rear.

The success of the Kholm tactics depends on the defender's ability to supply his strongholds, preferably by land, as in the cases of Demyansk and Rjev. But

Kholm has proved that even the complete encirclement of a stronghold is not fatal as long as the front is not too far away and the stronghold can be supplied by air. The Kholm tactics, although involving risks, as does every kind of warfare, had not failed up to Stalingrad, and we are inclined to believe that the German High Command at first considered Stalingrad in the same light. Thus, while the Germans within the city continued the battle against those districts still in Soviet hands, a strong German detachment advanced along the line Salsk/Stalingrad in order to re-establish connections with the Sixth Army.

On December 14 this detachment commenced its attack in the area of Kotelnikovo and forced back the Red troops located there towards Stalingrad. In the Tchir valley, too, the German troops offered stubborn and successful resistance in order to prevent the Red armies pressing from the north from reaching the railway. Simultaneously, all the other sectors of the long Eastern Front were successfully held against Red attacks, which were in part very severe and of which more will be said later.

THE BREAK-THROUGH AT BOGUTCHAR

At this moment—on December 20, exactly one month after the commencement of the winter offensive—the Red troops broke through in the region of Bogutchar on the middle Don, about halfway between Voronej and the Don Bend. By using tremendous forces and making terrible sacrifices, the Red Army succeeded in the ensuing days in cutting the railway Voronej/Rostov at Kan-temirovka and, moreover, by rolling on southward through the valley of the Kalitva, in crossing the railway Likhaya/Stalingrad at Tatsinskaya and in thrusting on towards the lower Don.

In answering the question of how it was possible for such a break-through to occur, we must bear in mind that the European Eastern Front had been thinned out considerably during the winter in order to give part of the troops a rest and new training in regions far

behind the front. Another factor was that in the meantime the mighty Don had frozen over firmly and had thus lost its character of natural defense of the left flank of the German Southern Army. All of Russia, normally divided up by numerous rivers and marshes, had once again become, as in every winter, one vast plain with no natural obstacles.

The chief explanation for the Soviets' success is to be found in the enormous mass of men and material employed by them and the ruthlessness with which this was done. Nobody had been more consistent in warning the world of the danger which Bolshevism presented to it than the leaders of the Reich, but even they have admitted more than once that they had greatly underestimated the actual strength of the USSR.

All this does not alter the fact that the Soviets had found the right place for a break-through here and had carried it out correctly. Although their attack bogged down soon, the prong which the Soviets had driven into the flank of the Southern Army represented a threat to the entire Southern Army. The Bolsheviks were now dangerously near Likhaya and Rostov, the two railway junctions which were indispensable as supply centers of the German Southern Army.

THE MEN OF STALINGRAD

The break-through at Bogutchar caused the Führer, with whom the final word rests in all vitally important cases, to come to three decisions: (1) to give up the attempt of relieving Stalingrad and to take back the troops from the Don Loop as well as from the area Salsk/Kotelnikovo; (2) to withdraw the North Caucasus army now entirely; and (3) to leave the Sixth Army in Stalingrad to cover these movements.

This sealed the fate of the Sixth Army, and now began its heroic struggle at a lost post.

While the thunder of the cannons of the relieving army at Aksai drew further and further off and finally died away, while the front of the German Southern

Army moved day by day further west from Stalingrad—during the last days of the defense of Stalingrad it was 250 kilometers away—and while the chances of ever again seeing their country disappeared entirely for the men of Stalingrad, they remained at their posts at the outer edge of Europe. Every one of them knew that he was now faced only by death or terrible captivity. He knew that for him there was no way out to freedom. But he also knew that every day of holding out was needed to enable his comrades still standing in the region between the lower Don and the Caucasus to return to the bulk of the army and thus to contribute to the final victory of his people. Knowing all this, he decided to sacrifice himself for his comrades and his nation, to do his duty to the bitter end, and to sell his life as dearly as possible.

What took place in the ensuing weeks on the banks of the Volga is a unique event in history. It was unique, not because of the size of the army which was destroyed here, for the Sixth Army was smaller than any one of a dozen Red armies which had been encircled by German troops in the course of the war. (Not counting dead, the Soviets lost in prisoners alone—each time within a few days—in the three battles of Bialystok/Minsk, Kiev, and Kharkov a total of 1.2 million men.) It was unique in that here in Stalingrad a whole army, from the field marshal down to the last army clerk, held out to the last, on foreign soil, cut off from the rest of the army, and without hope of relief.

RED AND WHITE

During the past winter, Soviet propaganda has done a lot of boasting and made every effort to inflate the successes of the Red Army and make them appear as large as possible in the eyes of the world. But even the Soviet reports on the battle of Stalingrad had to admit that the Sixth Army fought to the last moment and that the final survivors did not surrender till, half starved and frozen, they had come to the end of their ammunition and had nothing but their

bare hands with which to oppose Soviet tanks.

Since November 20, 1942, almost a million Red soldiers from six Soviet armies, with thousands of tanks, had been hurling themselves against the Sixth Army. The northern barrier position alone was attacked by five Red armored divisions and numerous infantry divisions. Day and night the Red flood was tossed against the breakwater of Stalingrad, and its dead covered the steppe.

All this took place in the Russian winter, while snowstorms, breaking through the gateway between the Urals and the Caucasus, raged from Siberia across the level steppes, and while men, who could find hardly a stick to burn in the treeless steppe and ruined Stalingrad, fought without pause, day and night, against Red death as well as white. Thousands of tons of steel descended upon them. But wherever a Soviet thrust broke through, hedgehog positions were formed in its rear, sometimes by large detachments and sometimes by a few men only—nucleuses of heroic resistance, every single one of which had to be destroyed with heavy sacrifices for the Reds.

THE SOVIETS SUGGEST SURRENDER

So tremendous were the losses suffered by the Soviets that the Red High Command decided to propose a cessation of hostilities to the survivors of the Sixth Army. According to Soviet reports this proposal was worded as follows:

To the Commander of the German Sixth Army, Colonel-General Paulus, or his deputy or assistant, and to the entire officers' corps, and rank-and-file of the surrounded German troops near Stalingrad:

The units of the Red Army have encircled this group of the German Army by a firm ring. All hopes for the salvation of your troops by an offensive of the German troops from the south or southwest have proved futile . . . The German transport aviation is suffering enormous losses in machines and personnel from the Russian aviation. Therefore, the attempts to rescue your group cannot be realized.

The position of your surrounded troops is very difficult. Your troops are suffering from hunger, cold, and disease. The cold Russian winter is only beginning. Frosts and strong winds are still ahead. Your troops, which have no winter clothing, are living in very difficult and unsanitary

conditions. You, as their commander, and all the German officers realize perfectly well that you have no real possibility of breaking through the ring of our encirclement. Your position is hopeless, and your further resistance would be absolutely senseless.

Under such conditions and with a view to avoiding senseless bloodshed, we propose that you accept the following conditions of capitulation:

(1) All the surrounded German troops headed by you and your staffs are to cease resistance.

(2) You are to hand over to us, in an organized manner, the entire personnel of your surrounded group, its entire equipment, and all the weapons of war, in full order.

We guarantee to all those who will cease resistance—all officers and soldiers—life and safety, and, after the termination of the war, their return to Germany or any other country they would wish to enter.

We shall leave to all those surrendering to our troops their military uniform, their badges and medals, and all their personal belongings, while the officers will be allowed to keep their cold weapons. All the surrendering officers, NCO's, and soldiers, shall receive normal nourishment. Medical aid shall be given to all sick men, to all frostbitten and wounded.

Your reply is expected at 10 o'clock exactly, on January 9, 1943, Moscow time, in writing. . . .

We warn you that, in the event of your refusal to capitulate, the troops of the Red Army and Red Air Force shall have to annihilate the surrounded German troops, and you shall be responsible for their complete annihilation.

This was on January 8, when German troops were still fighting between Salsk and Kotelnikovo and in the area Prokhladnensky/Georgyevsk (northern Caucasus) and still required several weeks to withdraw entirely into the Donets area.

THE SIXTH ARMY REPLIES

The answer to this ultimatum was a proud "No."

The battle continued for another twenty-five days. Again wave after wave of the Red flood dashed against the Sixth Army, which was being pressed into a continually diminishing space. German planes still came day and night as the sole connection with the main force of the army, to bring ammunition, food, and spare parts and to take away the severely wounded—47,000 in all, as Berlin later announced. (To appreciate this huge figure one might point out that it is one and a half times that of the total number of Australia's air passengers in

a whole year.) They flew under the most difficult conditions, constantly risking their lives, for there were no airfields to land on, only the storm-whipped, snow-covered steppe, torn into shreds by bomb craters . . . until the day came, in the middle of January, when the German planes, looking in vain for even the smallest place to land, circled over Stalingrad and flew off again. Even then the Sixth Army continued to fight for another two weeks. Not until the last day of January, at 7.15 a.m., were the last radio reports sent out from the headquarters of General Paulus. They ran: "The Bolsheviks are attacking headquarters with superior forces. We must destroy the radio station." And shortly afterwards: "Headquarters have ceased to function. Heil Führer."

What happened after that is known only from Soviet descriptions. General Paulus himself, who had been promoted to the rank of Field Marshal by the Führer a few days earlier, was not taken prisoner until the whole house which had been his headquarters was occupied and his guards were dead. In full uniform, said the Soviet report, he started on his way into imprisonment. He knew that the survivors of his army needed their leader in captivity no less than in battle.

The northern group of the Sixth Army, under General Strecker, still continued its battle in the Dzerjinsky tractor works of Stalingrad. For them the end came on February 2.

THE GERMAN NATION REPLIES

The answer given by the German nation to Stalingrad came at once. It was twofold. The special communiqué of the Führer's headquarters which announced the end of the Sixth Army closed with the words: "Divisions are already being formed for a new Sixth Army."

At the same time, the law concerning total mobilization was decreed. According to this law, all men from 16 to 65 and all women from 17 to 45 living within the territory of the German Reich must report for work to strengthen the effort of the home front: first, in order to in-

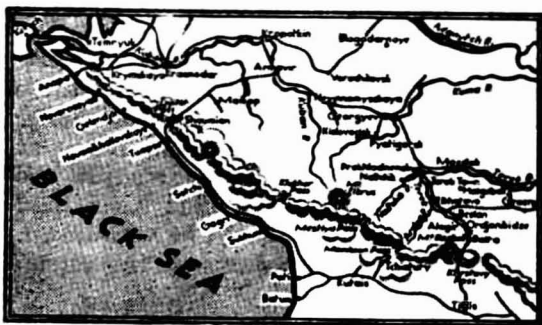
crease war production to the utmost, and secondly, in order to free as many able-bodied men as possible for the front. In addition to this, the Reich Minister for Economics decreed that all commercial enterprises, shops, restaurants, and hotels not urgently needed by the war industry or for supplying the population, as well as all places of entertainment, bars, and luxury restaurants, must be closed. These measures, which mean hardship for many individuals, will free additional millions of people for war purposes. With the disappearance of the last traces of peacetime life, the whole German nation has become one concentrated body of energy directed at a single goal, that of victory.

Thus the sacrifice of the Sixth Army enabled the German command to carry out its program on the southern front and to withdraw the other German armies. At the same time, it has fired the German people to a still greater willingness for self-sacrifice.

BETWEEN DON AND CAUCASUS

Shielded by the Sixth Army, the evacuation of the regions conquered in the summer of 1942 was meanwhile carried out. The European army standing north of the Caucasus and known as the Seventeenth Army had been exposed since the end of November to severe Red attacks, particularly along the Terek River and in the district of Alagir in the central Caucasus as well as at Tuapse on the Black Sea. While part of the German troops took up barrier positions, the withdrawal of the German and allied army took place, partly to the bridgehead on the lower Kuban but mainly via Rostov into the Donets area. In spite of all efforts, the Red Army was not able to disturb this process. On March 19, 1943, a Shanghai Soviet paper stated that approximately fifty German and allied divisions had been drawn off from the northern Caucasus territory. We doubt whether the European army there was as big as this, since large-scale operations had already ceased by the beginning of October 1942. Moreover, as a result of the natural protection of

the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and the Kalmuck steppes, as well as the friendly attitude of the mountain population and the Cossacks, large numbers were not required. Nevertheless, this statement on the part of the Soviets is interesting as it indirectly confirms the undisturbed withdrawal of the Seventeenth Army.



The North Caucasus Front

On January 3 began the withdrawal of the rearguards from the Caucasian barrier positions. Within one month, almost the entire territory up to the Don had been evacuated. Real fighting did not start until the crossing of the Don before Rostov and on the lower Kuban, where the German withdrawal slowed down east of Krasnodar in order to enable the bridgehead to be consolidated. At present the European troops are occupying an area of about 2,000 square kilometers around Novorossiysk, Anapa, and Temryuk, an area which was just recently exposed to severe attacks. The future will show whether the German High Command means to maintain this bridgehead in spite of the difficulty of supplying it across the Strait of Kertch.

A similar process to that on the northern slopes of the Caucasus took place on the left bank of the lower Don. Here, likewise safeguarded by their comrades fighting at Stalingrad, the German troops withdrew in January along the railway line Kotelnikovo/Salsk/Rostov into the Donets area, after a part of them had helped on the other side of the Don to force back the southern spearhead of the Reds who had broken through at Bogutchar. They managed to surround some of these Reds near Tatsinskaya on the

Likhaya/Stalingrad railway and destroy them.

WITHDRAWAL OF THE SECOND ARMY

The German flag over Stalingrad was not lowered until the German Army between the lower Don and the Caucasus had carried out its maneuver with a minimum of losses, while inflicting a maximum of losses on the Reds. As soon as it became clear that this maneuver could be effected safely, those troops, too, which had formed barrier positions in the great Don Bend at Millerovo and Tatsinskaya against the Red pressure on the Donets basin, had done their duty and could be withdrawn. In the second half of January, this region was also evacuated.

After the evacuation of the Don Bend, the next in turn was the great square Kursk/Voronej/Rossosh/Kharkov, held by the German Second Army. It had been captured in the summer of 1942 as a jumping-off place towards the Don Bend at the outset of the great German offensive. In spite of numerous Soviet attacks, it had been held until the end of January to protect the flank of the German Southern Army. Here, too, large troop units were withdrawn during January under the protection of a rearguard. At the end of January, between Rossosh and Voronej, the Reds broke into this area with masses of troops released from Stalingrad. According to their own reports, their army was at least 100 divisions strong here (*Novaya Jizn*, 22.1.43).

The winter has shown that, in those places where the Germans decided to offer resistance, the Soviets either did not break through at all or did not get very far. But here, as in the Caucasus and in the Don Bend, the intention was to give ground to the enemy. By February 16 the entire region, including the towns of Voronej, Kursk, Belgorod, and Kharkov, had been evacuated.

THE GERMAN COUNTEROFFENSIVE

Misinterpreting the situation and the German strategy, the Soviet press and the Allied camp were seized by a frenzy

of victory. They felt secure in the assumption that the rapid advance of the Red Army proved the annihilation of the German Army. In their enthusiasm, parts of the Red Army, among them the Third Tank Army, stormed ahead between Lisitchansk (on the middle Donets) and Sevsik (northwest of Kursk) towards the Dniepr and occupied Krasnoarmeisk (Grishino), Pavlograd, Krasnograd, Akhtyrka, Lebedin, and Sumy. The Red and Anglo-Saxon press were already dreaming of reaching the Dniepr and of cutting off and destroying the right wing of the German Army in the region north of the Sea of Azov and the Crimea.

At this moment the German counter-offensive began. Now it became evident that the jubilant Soviet reports about the collapse of the German armies, about their inability to fight, let alone advance, in the Russian winter, had been nothing but wishful thinking. With incredible force the German armies struck back, conducting their main thrust from Stalino. Like an iron fist they crushed the many tentacles which the Soviets had stretched out toward the Dniepr. There was nothing lacking in the punch the world had learned to associate with the German Army. The Soviets had to pay heavily for their recklessness. Within a few days, the Soviet army which had ventured too far was destroyed or thrown back, and the Mius/Donets front was re-established as it had been in the spring of 1942. Kharkov, the conquest of which Moscow had celebrated as a second Stalingrad, was rapidly retaken, and in the Kharkov-Belgorod district alone nine infantry divisions, four cavalry divisions, and thirty-four motorized and tank brigades of the Red Army were wiped out.

The Soviets, who had been trying throughout the winter to ridicule the German reports that their evacuation was being carried out according to plan, suddenly began to declare to the world that they in turn had evacuated the territory west of the Don according to plan. Our map shows the area reconquered by the German counterthrust from the Reds. On March 29 Berlin was able

to announce that 1,350 occupied places, among them 40 towns, had been retaken by the Germans. Only Kursk and a narrow area southwest of this town remained in the hands of the Reds.

WEST OF MOSCOW

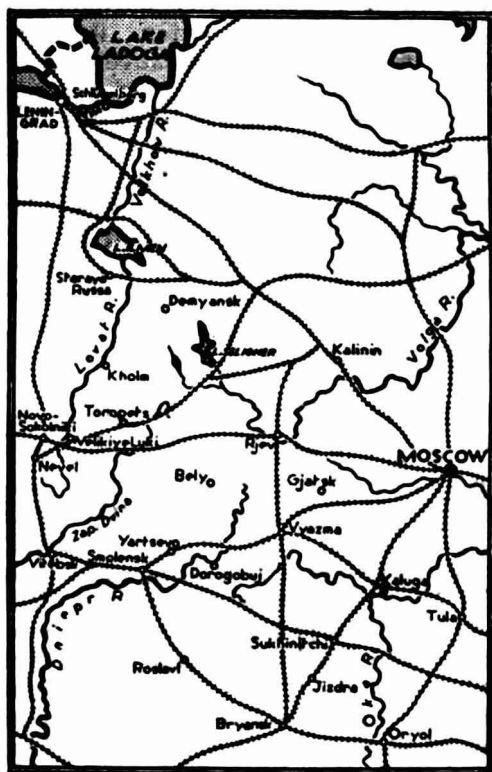
We have dealt in such detail with the events on the southern sector of the Eastern Front because they were far more dramatic than those in the north and because it was here that the greatest changes in occupation of territory took place, changes which held a prominent position in the imagination of newspaper readers.

But it would be mistaken to assume that the winter had passed quietly in the northern sector. This is not the case. On the contrary, the Red command had, as was proved by the huge concentration of tanks and planes, at first intended to conduct the main thrust of the winter offensive, not on the Don, but to the west of Moscow. Stalin probably hoped by breaking through at this spot—where already at the beginning of the winter offensive his troops stood no more than 400 kilometers from the Gulf of Riga, i.e., from the Baltic—to cut off the left flank of the German Army and, by directly threatening German territory, to force the entire center and right wing of the Germans to flow back.

The Soviet offensive in this area began one day later than that against Stalingrad, namely, on November 21. But here the Red armies did not come up against improvised positions which in part had been occupied only a few weeks before by the European armies, as was the case on the southern front. Here they were faced by a systematically fortified region, whose main supports were Demyansk, Velikiye Luki, and Rjev. The expected success of this carefully prepared offensive, carried out by the Soviets with vast numbers of men, tanks, and planes, did not materialize. It foundered on the determination of the defenders who, in contrast to the southern front, had orders here not to let the enemy advance.

FAITHLESS ALLY

A further disadvantage for the Reds was the fact that their great ally, "General Frost," left them in the lurch this time. The entire territory through which the Reds intended to attack here is split up by watercourses and marshes, which greatly facilitate the defense. The offensive was started in the assumption that frost would bridge all these waters. But the frost came later than expected and thereby contributed towards bringing the offensive to a standstill. In spite of the utmost efforts and terrible losses, the two pillars of Demyansk and Rjev



The Northern Sector of the Eastern Front

remained unshaken. The only success of this offensive, the capture of Velikiye Luki, did not come until two months later. By employing 13 infantry divisions and 8 tank brigades, the Reds succeeded early in January in cutting off the German garrison of Velikiye Luki. But even then it still held out for weeks

before abandoning the town and fighting its way through to the German lines.

Only in December, when the Soviets realized their failure on this front, while developments on the southern front were more favorable to them, did Stalin decide to throw to the south part of the forces attacking west of Moscow and the reserve army being held there. This contributed towards the success of their break-through at Bogutchar. After this, the battles in the sector west of Moscow lost the wild, sanguinary character they had had from the end of November to the end of December. Nevertheless, the German High Command—although not before the beginning of March—decided to shorten its lines in this sector too. This movement did not take place under enemy pressure. It consisted of taking back the two prongs of Demyansk and Rjev/Bely/Vyazma which jutted deep into the enemy positions. The front was withdrawn to a line which runs in front of the German strongholds of Staraya Russa, Novo-Sokolniki, Nevel, Yartsevo, Dorogobuj, and Oryol, thereby shortening it by more than 400 kilometers.

CORRIDOR ON LOGS

There is one more sector that we must mention here: the front south of Lake Ladoga. It was here that the Reds conducted the last of their various winter offensives. It was begun on January 12, simultaneously across the Volkhov westward in the direction of Leningrad and from Leningrad eastward. The land connection with Leningrad thereby achieved was celebrated in the Soviet and Allied press as a momentous victory. Yet, in order to arrive at a sober estimation of this success, one must bear in mind that the question, whether the sacrifices made for the break-through have been worth the cost, can only be answered in the next few months. During the winter, just as in the winter of 1941/42, Leningrad was not blocked, since the solidly frozen Lake Ladoga made connections with the shore of the lake occupied by the Reds possible. The

corridor which the Reds have captured on the southern shore of the lake is, according to their own claims, only a few kilometers wide, and the railway line that has been built there by laying logs over the marshy area is in the direct line of fire of the German artillery. The warm season will not only free Lake Ladoga from ice again but will also transform its southern shore into a morass. Only if the Soviets succeed in keeping the corridor open in summer and in widening it, will their offensive have been worth while.

THE PRICE

Of great importance in judging the balance of the winter war is the price paid by both sides. In his speech on the Heroes' Memorial Day, on March 21, 1943, Chancellor Adolf Hitler informed the German people that it had to mourn the death of 542,000 fallen soldiers since September 1939. On the basis of this figure and those given by the German High Command on July 2, 1942, and by the Führer on November 9, 1942, the German losses in men killed in action on the Eastern Front are:

Summer and autumn 1941	..	162,000
Winter 1941/42	89,000
Spring 1942	20,000
Summer and autumn 1942	..	29,000
Winter 1942/43	192,000

To these severe German losses must be added those of the other European armies. In the case of the Italians these were particularly heavy, for, according to official figures released in Rome, they lost 6,700 dead and 72,000 missing on the Eastern Front from January 1942 to February 1943, most of them probably during the battles of the past winter. The troops of Italy, Rumania, Finland, Hungary, Croatia, and the volunteer units of almost all the peoples of Europe, including those peoples under the Soviet yoke, have contributed their share to the achievements of the winter war. Newspaper readers know how often the German communiqués have praised the courage of Rumanian divisions; while behind the terse statements of the Finnish High Command stands the brave, silent fight of a heroic nation

on an exceptionally difficult battleground. Special recognition is deserved by the deeds of the sons of sunny Italy carried out, far from their homes and with great losses, under the for them particularly hard conditions of the Russian winter.

For the sake of completeness we include the figures published on April 3, 1943, by the Soviet Information Bureau regarding the alleged losses of the European armies, although these figures represent the customary exaggeration of Soviet propaganda. According to these claims, the European armies are supposed to have lost 850,000 dead and 343,585 prisoners in the course of the winter up to March 31, 1943.

So far the Soviets have remained silent on their own losses. But Berlin has announced the following figures for Soviet losses, not counting prisoners. These figures do not only show the monstrous price paid by the Soviets during this winter: they also throw an interesting light on the relative severity of fighting at the various sectors of the front:

Stalingrad	300,000
Don Bend	100,000
West of Kursk	50,000
" Donets R.	215,000
Kharkov/Belgorod	50,000
Oryol	150,000
West of Moscow	150,000
Velikiye Luki and Mius R. ..	100,000
Volkhov R./Leningrad	250,000
Kuban	120,000
Total:	1,485,000

According to the same Berlin report, the Red Army lost 11,958 tanks and 3,763 planes in the course of the winter battles. Consequently, the total number of planes lost by the Soviets since June 22, 1941, amounts to 37,283, and that of tanks to 34,000, figures that pass all imagination and that show the gigantic war preparation of the Soviet Union.

In January, Captain Cyril Falls, one of England's best-known military writers and the military commentator of the *Times*, wrote in the *Illustrated London News* that "the final result of the Russian winter offensive will be costlier for the

Russians than for the Axis powers." (DNB, Geneva, 10.1.43.)

A SOBER VIEW

An interesting and sober estimation of the winter campaign was given in the London newspaper *Evening Standard* on February 10, 1943 (Domei, Stockholm). We quote from it here, not because we believe the figures on the strength of the Red Army to be reliable, but because the article shows how even Englishmen judge the winter campaign when they rid themselves of their wishful thinking:

At the start of the Soviet winter offensive, the Russians had, on the vast front from Murmansk to the Caucasus region, 250 divisions. Behind this line they had 80 divisions as reserves, while 200 more divisions were kept in reserve for use in strategic encounters. Furthermore, there were 120 divisions of recruits undergoing training. In short, it was obvious that Soviet Russia had an army of 650 divisions to pitch against the Germans when the winter offensive started.

The Germans wisely saw the situation and apparently planned to wear down this enormous army with as small a sacrifice as possible. The Russians have played into German inducement tactics and thrown in not only the reserves of the second line but also the reserves for strategic use. During the past nine months, the Russians have been suffering an average of 200,000 casualties a month. The Soviet striking power has already passed its climax, and there are signs that the Russians are presently pressed with a dire shortage of trained troops.

The Germans, on the other hand, have wisely refrained from usurping their reserve troops and shortened their defense lines in the most strategic manner, while dealing heavy blows on the advancing Soviets. With the arrival of spring, the Germans can throw their enormous reserve troops into the front lines and launch a vigorous offensive throughout the entire front.

STALIN VS. STANDLEY

In judging the winter war, we must include considerations of a not purely military nature.

Since the summer of 1941, the Russian people and the Red Army have been incited to continue their fight against Europe by English and American promises of military and material aid. In the course of time this entire complex of problems has narrowed down to the two terms of "second front" and "lend-lease aid." Apart from disputes over the shaping of postwar Europe—which had only the one practical significance of

contributing towards opening the eyes of many Europeans regarding the extent of the danger threatening them in the case of a Bolshevik and Anglo-Saxon victory—the absence of the promised large quantities of arms and of a second front is the main reason for the none too friendly relations between the Soviets and their allies. Moscow's disappointment in both respects has grown to such dimensions that we must say a few words about it.

For a long time it has been no secret that the Soviets were extremely dissatisfied with the limited amount of Anglo-American aid. But it was not until last autumn and winter that the dissatisfaction simmering under cover became apparent to all the world. The two most prominent voices on this subject were a Bolshevik and an American one.

On October 4, 1942, Stalin made the following sharp declaration in his letter to an American journalist which was published in the world press:

Compared with the help which the Soviet Union is giving the Allies by concentrating the main forces of the German-Fascist armies on herself, Allied help for the Soviet Union has so far still been little effective. To expand and better this help, only one thing is necessary: that the Allies fulfill their obligations fully and punctually. [For full text, see our November 1942 issue, p. 370.]

With these carefully formulated words, Stalin made it very clear that his allies were not living up to their commitments.

The opposite point of view was represented by the US Ambassador to the USSR, Admiral W. H. Standley, when he declared on March 9, 1943:

The Soviets seem to be trying to create the impression at home and abroad that they are fighting this war alone, and there seems to be a desire on their part to make things appear as if they are fighting this war with their resources alone without outside assistance. Ever since I have been here I have been looking for recognition in Soviet papers of the fact that they are getting material help through us, not only through the lend-lease aid agreements, but through the American Red Cross as well. I have failed, however, to find any acknowledgement in the Soviet press.

Which of the two is right?

WHAT AMERICA IS SENDING . . .

There can be no doubt that America has sent a lot of war material to the Soviet Union. Recently, the US Lend-Lease Administrator, Edward S. Stettinius, told the US Senate that out of nine billion dollars' worth of lend-lease deliveries up to January 31, 1943, the USSR had been sent 1.3 billion dollars' worth, or three million tons (TO, Lisbon, 2.3.43).

If one considers that the Soviets are the only ones in the Allied camp who have so far done any really large-scale fighting, these figures appear modest enough. But they are not surprising. Neither in Washington nor in London is there any true desire for a Soviet victory. Both are only trying to drag out the present situation as long as possible, a situation in which Germany and the Soviet Union are fighting each other while the Anglo-American forces are being spared. Consequently, only that amount of war material has been sent to the Soviets that was absolutely necessary to keep them from collapsing entirely.

. . . AND WHAT THE USSR GETS

Still, one could say: 3 million tons of war material are not to be sneezed at. But here the submarines of the Axis powers have a word to say. The world knows that one million tons after another of enemy shipping has fallen victim to them. Thus it is hardly amazing that American politicians usually end their proud speeches about the large shipments to the USSR with such meek sentences as "Not all of our shipments arrive" (Roosevelt, 12.12.42), or "Part of what we have sent has been lost on the way" (Stettinius, 21.1.43).

As regards the shortest route from the USA to the USSR, the First Lord of the Admiralty, Admiral Alexander, made this gloomy statement:

Each convoy directed along the northern route to Russia has so far been subject to violent enemy air and U-boat attacks in that part of the route which is more difficult to protect, and shipping losses in these operations have been considerable.

At the same time he admitted the loss of two cruisers, three destroyers, one submarine, and three minesweepers in these waters (Stefani, Rome, 23.11.42).

Admiral Alexander's words were emphasized by a Berlin report (10.12.42) to the effect that, since September 1942, no Allied convoy had gone to Murmansk and that during this period altogether only three ships, one of them in a severely damaged condition, had reached Murmansk from the Atlantic. (And yet winter, with its almost continuous night, was the most favorable time for convoys to risk traveling over the waters at the northern end of Europe which are dominated by German planes and U-boats.) On the same day the Leningrad radio reported that the harbor of Arkhangelsk—next to Murmansk the largest port on the north coast of Russia—was frozen over. Hence the supplies of war material for the Red Army were limited chiefly to the enormous detour via Persia. But even this route suffered from severe losses in tonnage, owing to the vigilance of the Axis submarines. Finally, part of the supplies reached the Red Army via Vladivostok.

Neither the Anglo-Americans nor the Soviets have published figures on the quantities of lend-lease material that have actually reached the Soviet Union. The Anglo-Americans have not done so because it is their policy to conceal their losses in tonnage, the Soviets because they wish thereby to indicate that these supplies have so far been—in the words of the Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg—"a drop in the ocean" which was not worth talking about.

However, we have the testimony of German soldiers to the effect that the Anglo-American armament aid has so far scarcely been noticeable on the Eastern Front. Every few days German reports from the Eastern Front point out that the enemy tanks met in battle are almost exclusively of Soviet manufacture. The absence of Anglo-American arms in large numbers proves, it is true, that the Soviets have an armament production more gigantic than hardly anyone would

have believed possible; but it does not contribute towards enhancing the love of the Russians for their allies. Since the Stalin declaration mentioned above, the Russians have been constantly pressing for increased aid.

"AFTER YOU, PLEASE"

Moscow has never recognized the Anglo-American invasion of North Africa as a second front and has in recent months again strongly emphasized its desire for a real second front. One of the propagandistic means of pressure in this direction was the oft-repeated Soviet claim that the Germans had transferred so many divisions from western Europe to the east in the course of the winter that there was hardly anything to prevent the establishment of a second front. On February 3, for instance, Tass reported that 11 divisions had already arrived in Russia from western Europe and that another 9 were on the way. On March 3, the Soviets spoke of 31 divisions, and these speculations were crowned by a long article about the second front appearing on April 3 in a Shanghai Soviet paper. We quote:

Only 12 German divisions have remained to protect the coast and occupied Europe. Even if we allow for an error of several divisions in our calculations, one can reckon that, for the protection against an Anglo-American landing, certainly no more than 20 German divisions are left.

While the Soviets are thus deluding themselves and trying to force their dangerous illusions upon their allies, in order to show them what child's play the establishment of a second front would be, they keep on hearing from London and Washington that the second front is an extremely difficult undertaking and should not be expected too soon. Cyril Falls, whom we have quoted before, put this viewpoint into a very typical form. Not only did he say that "the invasion would cost hundreds of thousands of casualties and at the present moment would not even decide the war," but he added words which, in the ears of the battered Red Army at the end of its greatest effort, must have sounded bitter if not actually mocking. Captain Falls told the Russians that "a

large-scale invasion of Europe must coincide with Soviet successes on the Eastern Front." In other words, the Soviet winter offensive, of which Moscow boasted so much, is not regarded by him as a sufficiently great success to justify an invasion. And even for the future he does not expect an invasion to be successful "unless the Soviets score gigantic successes." (CPS, 2.4.43.)

Thus, instead of a second front, the Russians are presented by their allies with the cynical request, first to produce gigantic successes of their own.

Under these circumstances, can there be any cause for surprise if the Russian people feel a growing disgust for their allies and also increasing doubt in their own leaders, who are driving millions of Russians to their deaths? It could only be a question of time before this disgust and the yearning for the end of the hopeless war solidified into a tendency directed against Stalin.

GENERAL VLASSOV

On March 17, 1943, the anti-Bolshevist newspaper *Zarya*, which appears in Smolensk, published an open letter signed by a certain Lieut. General Andrey Andreyevitch Vlassov. The contents were something as follows:

Stalin has involved Russia in a war serving Britain's and America's imperialistic interests, which are absolutely alien to the Russian people. Moreover, in serving these interests, Stalin has seen a possibility of realizing his own aspirations for world rule. It is for this reason that he has linked up the fate of the Russian people with that of the British. Thus, owing to Stalin, all the misery which the people of the Soviet Union have been suffering during the last twenty-five bitter years has been climaxed by the misfortunes of this war.

This reasoning must lead to the conclusion that Bolshevism in general and Stalin in particular are the chief enemies of the Russian people. Thus the only thing to do is to overthrow the Bolshevik regime, put an end to the bloodshed in this war that is not necessary for the Russian people but is being waged for foreign interests alone, and build up a new Russia. This task of the Russian people can be solved only in union with Germany and with the aid of the German people. Today as in the past, the interests of the Russian people coincide with those of the German people as well as with those of the remaining countries of Europe. Bolshevism alone has separated the Russian people by an insurmountable wall from Europe.

Such ideas have been voiced before. Why did they cause a world sensation this time? Who is Vlassov?

CAREER OF A BOLSHEVIK

The biography of the Lieutenant General reads like that of an ideal Bolshevik. The son of a peasant in the province of Nishny-Novgorod on the middle Volga, he was born in 1901. At the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution he was just sixteen, and thereafter grew up entirely a product of Bolshevism. In 1919 he entered the Red Army as a private and worked his way up to the rank of an officer. He became a member of the Communist Party, received a number of high Soviet decorations, served in 1938/39 as a military adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, and distinguished himself in the present war in the fighting at Kiev, Moscow, and Leningrad, so that he was finally entrusted with the command of the Second Shock Army, which was to break through on the Volkhov.

The important fact about General Vlassov is that he is not an emigrant and a traditional opponent of the Soviet regime, but its son who, as he has declared himself, has suffered no wrong from this regime. And it is from among the Russians who have lived through twenty-five years of Bolshevism that a true change of the Russian people must come. It was the experience of this war which changed Vlassov's attitude towards Bolshevism. The terrible sacrifices in lives which the Russian people had to bear at Stalin's command gave him more and more food for thought. And the ruthless sacrificing of the Second Shock Army led to his break with Bolshevism and to the convictions quoted above. His open letter goes on to say:

With these ideas, with this resolve, I was taken prisoner in the recent fighting together with a handful of loyal men. I spent more than six months in a camp for prisoners of war. Not only did I not change my resolve under prison-camp conditions, but my conviction has become even firmer.

On a basis of honor and sincere conviction, in the full consciousness of responsibility toward my country, my people, and history, for what I have done, I call upon the people to fight, setting myself the task of founding a new Russia. It is not for

a return to the past that I appeal to the people. No, I call upon it for a happy future, to fight for the completion of the national revolution, to fight for the establishment of a new Russia!

Since neither Stalin nor Bolshevism is fighting for Russia, it is the duty of every Russian to join the ranks of the anti-Bolshevist movement against Stalin, for peace, and for a new Russia.

ST. ANDREW'S CROSS

Immediately upon the publication of General Vlassov's open letter, a "Committee for the Liberation of Russia" was founded, which was joined by a number of Soviet generals taken prisoner, among them Major General W. F. Malyshev. Vlassov himself is the chairman of the Committee and the leader of the "Army of Liberation," which is made up of former prisoners of war and whose coat of arms is a St. Andrew's cross on a blue, white, and red background. Parts of the new army are already on the Eastern Front.

It is understandable that a man like Vlassov first appeared openly among the prisoners of war. It has been hard to find Vlassovs in the fighting ranks of the Red Army so far, because they were "liquidated" long before any one heard of them. Moreover, most officers of the Red Army stand far too much under the terrible pressure of the war and of Bolshevik terror and propaganda to be able to come to their senses. The leaders of the Red Army, being as they are the products of the Bolshevik Revolution, have for the last twenty-five years been living under a tension that can hardly be imagined in any other nation. The prison camp offers many of them their first opportunity to think for themselves. Vlassov is perhaps not important as a person, but he is important as a symptom. Millions of Russians are prisoners of war. The contrast between life as they knew it in the Soviet Union and life in Europe, even in a prison camp, has provided them with much food for thought, and there must be many Vlassovs in their ranks.

A Shanghai Soviet paper tried to scoff at the Vlassov case by asking ironically, why this Vlassov needed six months to come out into the open with his ideas.

In other words, it considers six months a suspiciously long time. To us this seems to point to the contrary. If Soviet generals, who have lived all their lives under Bolshevism and have never seen the world except through Red glasses, turned against Stalin on the day after their capture, they would appear very suspicious to the Germans and would be regarded as dangerous opportunists or even as *agents provocateurs*.

WHILE THE DAYS GROW LONGER

As we go to press, "General Mud" has enforced a temporary cessation of large-scale operations along the Eastern Front. The winter battle is over, and both sides are preparing for the summer. This pause between battles calls for an estimate of the position and strength of the opponents.

As far as the course of the front is concerned, the situation is about the same as it was a year ago. The Soviets have an advantage in that they now possess their corridor to Leningrad and have reoccupied the German salients at Demyansk and Rjev, as well as the district of Kursk; the Germans by the fact that, in contrast to the previous year when the enemy held the world's strongest fortress, Sevastopol, and the Kertch Peninsula, they now have a firm hold on the entire Crimea and possess a bridgehead on the lower Kuban.

With regard to numerical strength, the Red Army has until now been greatly superior. The three main reasons for this are: (1) the population of the USSR was on June 22, 1941, about 50 per cent larger than that of Germany and Italy combined; (2) the Soviet Union has been in a state of total mobilization since the autumn of 1941 and has ruthlessly exploited every ounce of her strength, while Germany, as a result of her experience in gaining the overwhelming victories of 1939/41 with relatively small armies and because she underestimated the fighting capacity of the USSR, long refrained from such measures; (3) the European armies have to guard all the frontiers of Europe, from the

North Cape to the Pyrenees and Crete, while the USSR can concentrate almost all its armed forces on its western front.

Of these three reasons, only the third one has remained valid. The first two have changed radically.

As regards (1), the human losses of the USSR have been incomparably greater than those of the European armies. Not only has it lost vast numbers of its population owing to the German advance deep into its territory: it has also suffered losses on the battlefield which are unparalleled in history. In the two summer offensives of 1941 and 1942, the Germans deprived the Red Army of millions of soldiers at a relatively small cost to themselves. On the other hand, the Reds achieved the territorial gains of their two winter offensives at a terrific price. They used the same method over and over again: they drove huge numbers of their men against the positions of the enemy in order to crush them even at the cost of gigantic losses to themselves.

As regards (2), when the first winter battle had shown a year ago the magnitude

of the task of destroying Bolshevism, Germany changed her man-power policy. She started on the road of total mobilization, a policy which reached its peak in the legislation of the Stalingrad days. On April 10 a remarkable report came out of Germany telling the story of the so-called "Unruh Army" (named after General von Unruh, who is in charge of the mobilization of German man power). This report includes the sensational statement: "During the last six months, almost as many new soldiers have been trained in Germany as made up the whole German Army before."

Thus it is safe to say that, during the approaching summer, the difference between the numerical strengths of the Soviet and European armies will be smaller than at any time since the start of the war. The spring of the German military machine which was uncoiled during the huge expansion of the summer of 1942 has been rewound during the winter. It has regained its dynamic power and will shortly be ready to lash out anew.



The young cavalry officer von Wedell, a favorite of Frederick the Great's, had been killed in battle. On hearing this news, the King rode aimlessly about the battlefield in agony of mind. "Wedell, Wedell!" he shouted, as though by his cries he could recall the young hero to life.

A corporal lying among a heap of dead and wounded heard the King shouting thus and, making a last effort, sat up and said: "Your Majesty, there are nothing but Wedells lying here!"

The King halted his horse, gazed at the dying man for some time, and said: "You have taught me a good lesson. I thank you."